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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.



SUGGESTIONS FOR SCREENS.

BY
EMMA HAYWOOD.

SCREENS of various kinds adapted for different uses are deservedly and universally popular. Any house with any pretension to style and elegance, apart from considerations of comfort, is furnished with screens of some sort in almost every room. Screens are not only ornamental, they are practically useful. In Summer they serve to hide wide open doors and thus secure greater privacy, in winter they intercept searching draughts, so difficult to escape in severe weather. They help to break the monotony of square rooms, and a corner screened off is very handy for putting out of sight odds and ends that are more or less in request, and when left about litter a room and give it an untidy appearance. A tall three fold

screen is often of the greatest utility in a dining-room for screening from view details of service at meal times, at the same time screens may be highly ornamental. They are often composed of the richest fabrics, mounted in costly frames in keeping with the rest of the furniture, or it is possible with the exercise of a little ingenuity to obtain a very good effect and to have a screen made at a comparatively small expense, that will add greatly to the beauty of its surroundings.

For a dining-room the effect aimed at should be somewhat sombre, the frame should be solid and massive. Frames can be made in great variety to suit all tastes. Those of carved wood, polished, are especially handsome and suitable for painted tapestry, heavy embroideries, brocaded silk, or raised lincrusta. Ebonised wood picked out with a little gold also makes a good and less expensive frame work, as does also bamboo or an imitation of bamboo in wood, which can be stained to any shade desired and afterwards varnished.

A very original three-fold screen executed to order for a dining-room, regardless of cost, was made as follows: In the middle of the centre panel was mounted a beautifully stuffed group of pheasants; the back ground was composed entirely of pheasant's feathers, made to present a smooth, even surface of rich coloring. The panels on either side were treated in precisely the same manner, only wild ducks were substituted for pheasants. The contrast thus obtained of velvety greens and browns was indescribably beautiful. The whole was mounted in richly carved oak of a dark shade.

Indian fretwork screens are very desirable and vary in price according to the design, some of this fretwork is exquisitely fine. Japanese screens also are made in infinite variety of style, material and price. They are almost invariably good in design. The Japanese are inimitable in decorative art; they possess a happy knack of occupying a space rather than filling it, the result being highly satisfactory and artistic. A simple realistic branch thrown across a panel with true artistic feeling will be far more pleasing and truly decorative in effect than if the whole space be covered with a labored design.

For a drawing-room or boudoir a lighter and much more fanciful style can be adopted than for a dining-room, and here plush mounts of varied coloring can be used with excellent effect. If not entirely made of plush an inner mount of this material is both handsome and effective. Bamboo enamelled with white and picked out with gold looks charming.

There is great opportunity in the choice of materials for ladies to display individual taste and skill, and should they incline to decorate screens for themselves, whether with painting or embroidery, a still further scope is given for their artistic efforts. Screens with the upper sections only decorated with art work look very well, the lower part being arranged with flat folds of satin or plush. For smaller screens with only two folds, a shelf

may be added just where the folds join the work above; this shelf is made wide enough to hold a cup and saucer. Sometimes the lower portion of such a screen is made of fretwork.

For a smoking room or morning room a scrap screen made of colored pictures is interesting and bright, it affords amusement and employment for winter evenings; much skill and artistic taste may be brought into play in the making. Mastic varnish should be used for these screens when finished in preference to any other kind, because it does not turn yellow with age and so discolor the pictures. Christmas and birthday cards can be utilized in this way. This kind of screen especially commends itself for a smoking room, because when the varnish is quite hard it can be cleaned with a sponge and cold water. Folded chintz in light bamboo frames looks fresh and gay for bedrooms.

A screen that was described and illustrated in a recent number of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER struck me as being both novel and pretty in shape. The three folds were each of different heights, the lowest being about four feet, the middle one five, and the highest six feet. For large screens one design carried right through the three panels looks less stiff than using an entirely separate subject for each panel, but if the latter method of treatment is preferred, great care should be taken that the work harmonizes as a whole.

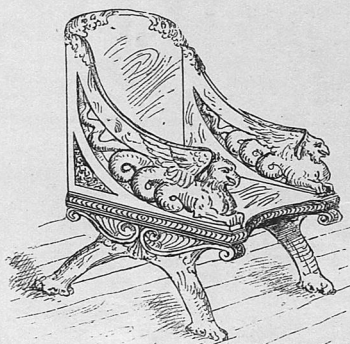
There are some very good designs made in raised lincrusta. This material when highly decorated with metallic colors, makes a handsome and comparatively inexpensive screen. Plain lincrusta likewise forms an excellent ground work to paint free-hand designs on; when lacquered it is greatly improved and then resembles gilt leather. It is very durable and easy to paint on, the texture is good and the colors do not sink in. Transparent screens made of black or colored gauze are very pretty placed in front of a window where the view is undesirable. Japanese embroideries on gauze look especially well used in this way.

For fire screens stained glass is beautiful, if sufficiently rich, but common or cheap stained glass should be avoided, and something less costly but excellent of its kind substituted in its stead. Silvered glass painted in oils is also pretty for the purpose, though this is not very high art. Colored gauze or bolting cloth suitably decorated with painting or needlework, is also admirable. Ferns and flowers dried and placed between two clear glasses have a charming appearance. Anything transparent or semi-transparent is very suitable for a fire screen, because the fire can be seen at the same time that protection is afforded from it.

A very effective square screen can be made by placing on a ground of old gold plush a stuffed peacock, the body and head projecting, while the outspread tail lies flat against the back ground. Small two fold or three fold screens can be devised in endless variety. These are in reality more for ornament than use, and may be as fanciful as inventive genius can make them.

One word in conclusion. When arranging a room, whether the screens in it be for real use or merely for ornament, be sure they are in every respect fitted for each position they occupy, and are not incongruous with their surroundings in style or coloring. The great secret of furnishing a room to the best advantage lies not so much in the arbitrary following of any particular school, period, or scheme of color, as in the careful blending of everything as a whole. The fortunate possessor of an instinctive sense of harmony may take great liberties with apparently fixed rules and often with the happiest results, because so long as harmony prevails it is next to impossible to outrage good taste.

WHEN mirrors are etched at borders, centers or at top the frames should not be gilded but be preferably of steel in dead hue, figured hardwood or velvet.



CARVED CHAIR, BY T. CARLYLE CAMERON.